

BLOFIELD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1896

To the Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the Blofield Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman, ladies & gentleman,

In submitting my Annual Report for the year 1896 it is a pleasant task to record the Sanitary events of a year characterised by an exceptionally low death-rate and an almost entire absence of epidemic disease in your District.

In 1895 the death-rate had fallen to 13.2 per 1,000, the lowest point reached during the twelve years I have held the Office of Medical Officer of Health. This record has now been beaten by the death-rate for the past year declining still further to 11.5 per 1,000 population.

It is much to be regretted that no opportunity is now afforded for the comparison of this satisfactory state of the public health in your District with that of other rural Districts in the County. For some few years the Norfolk County Council arranged for the tabulation of vital statistics and occasionally for a synopsis of the Annual Reports of M.O.H.s, but this has been discontinued and no annual record of the health of the County as a whole is now published. The practical value of such a Report as was prepared by Dr. Cooper-Pattin for the year 1894 cannot well be appreciated by any but Medical Officers of Health.

In such a report is to be found a standard by which an M.O.H. can gauge the deficiencies (or otherwise) in the sanitation of his District and is also able to gain from it information of the greatest value in advising his Authority.

Following the custom of former years in dealing with statistics, the County Asylum will be considered as outside the District.

POPULATION:- Taking 30.2 (the average yearly increase for the decennial period 1881 - 91) as a basis of calculation, I estimate the population at the middle of 1896 to be 11,406

BIRTHS:- The total number of Births during the year was 299 (males 156 females 143). The Birth-rate stands at 25.3 per 1,000.

DEATHS: The number of deaths registered was 132. This gives the exceptionally low death-rate of 11.5 per 1,000 population.

INFANT MORTALITY: The number of deaths at ages under one year was 35 slightly in excess of last year. This gives a death-rate per 1,000 births of 117.05.

OLD AGE MORTALITY: Deaths registered at ages over 65 years number only 54 giving an old age mortality of 4.7 per 1,000 population.

ZYMOTIC DISEASE

The Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act 1889, which works exceedingly smoothly in your District, enables me to furnish the following table showing the incidence of infectious disease.

BLICKFELD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1898

To the Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Blickfeld Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

In submitting my Annual Report for the year 1898 it is a pleasant task to record the sanitary events of a year characterised by an exceptionally low death-rate and an almost entire absence of epidemic disease in your District.

In 1895 the death-rate had fallen to 13.7 per 1,000, the lowest point reached during the twelve years I have held the Office of Medical Officer of Health. This record has now been beaten by the death-rate for the past year declining still further to 11.5 per 1,000 population. It is much to be regretted that no opportunity is now afforded for the comparison of this satisfactory state of the public health in your District with that of other Rural Districts in the County. For some

few years the Norfolk County Council arranged for the publication of vital statistics and occasionally for a synopsis of the Annual Reports of M.O.H.s, but this has been discontinued and no annual record of the health of the County as a whole is now published. The practical value of such a report as was prepared by Dr. Cooper-Harris for the year 1894 cannot well be appreciated by any but Medical Officers of Health.

In such a report it is to be found a standard by which an M.O.H. can gauge the delicacies (or otherwise) in the sanitation of his District and is also able to gain from it information of the greatest value in deciding his authority.

Following the custom of former years in dealing with statistics, the County Asylum will be considered as outside the District.

POPULATION:— Taking 30.2 (the average yearly increase for the decennial period 1881 - 91) as a basis of calculation, I estimate the population at the middle of 1898 to be 11,400.

BIRTHS:— The total number of Births during the year was 299 (males 156 females 143). The Birth-rate stands at 25.3 per 1,000.

DEATHS:— The number of deaths registered was 132. This gives the exceptionally low death-rate of 11.5 per 1,000 population.

INFANT MORTALITY:— The number of deaths of ages under one year was 25 slightly in excess of last year. This gives a death-rate per 1,000 births of 117.02.

OLD AGE MORTALITY: Deaths registered at ages over 65 years number only 24 giving an old age mortality of 4.7 per 1,000 population.

NOTICIE DISEASE

The Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act 1889, which works exceedingly smoothly in your District, enables me to furnish the following table showing the incidence of infectious diseases.

Table prepared from Notification Certificates

Parish	Cases of Infectious Disease					Total
	Scarlet Fever	Typhoid Fever	Diphtheria	Mem: Group	Erysipelas	
Acle			1			1
Asylum		3	1			4
Blofield					1	1
Bradeston	2					2
Brundall			2			2
Buckenham		1	3			4
Cantley			1			1
Freethorpe		1				1
Halvergate	5	1	1	1		8
Hawtingham					1	1
Hemblington	3					3
Lingwood		1				1
Plumstead		1				1
Postwick		1				1
Reedham		1			2	3
Thorpe	3	2				5
Upton		3				3
Witton	1					1
Woodbastwick	2					2
Workhouse					1	1
Total	16	15	9	1	5	46

From this Table it will be seen that (excluding the Asylum) forty-two Notifications only were received, and that these referred for the most part, to isolated cases. It can therefore be fairly stated that during the past year your District has been free from epidemic disease.

An analysis of the seven deaths which occurred from Zymotic disease is given in the subjoined Table:-

	Table showing fatal Cases					Total
	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Mem: Group	Typhoid Fever	Whooping Cough	
Sth. Walsham Sub-District	0	0	1	2	3	6
Blofield Sub-District	0	0	0	0	0	1
Thorpe	0	0	0	0	0	0
St. Andrew	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	0	0	1	2	3	7

It will be noticed that in the Blofield Sub-District or Western half of the district deaths from infectious disease are represented by a single fatal case of Measles. It will also be noticed that no deaths have been registered as due to Diphtheria, a disease which a short time ago was very prevalent in the District.

The Zymotic Death-rate stands at .61 per 1,000 population.

Cases of Infectious Disease

Scarlet Typhoid Diphtheria Measles Typhus Total

Period	Scarlet	Typhoid	Diphtheria	Measles	Typhus	Total
1910	1	1	1	1	1	5
1911	1	1	1	1	1	5
1912	1	1	1	1	1	5
1913	1	1	1	1	1	5
1914	1	1	1	1	1	5
1915	1	1	1	1	1	5
1916	1	1	1	1	1	5
1917	1	1	1	1	1	5
1918	1	1	1	1	1	5
1919	1	1	1	1	1	5
1920	1	1	1	1	1	5
1921	1	1	1	1	1	5
1922	1	1	1	1	1	5
1923	1	1	1	1	1	5
1924	1	1	1	1	1	5
1925	1	1	1	1	1	5
1926	1	1	1	1	1	5
1927	1	1	1	1	1	5
1928	1	1	1	1	1	5
1929	1	1	1	1	1	5
1930	1	1	1	1	1	5
1931	1	1	1	1	1	5
1932	1	1	1	1	1	5
1933	1	1	1	1	1	5
1934	1	1	1	1	1	5
1935	1	1	1	1	1	5
1936	1	1	1	1	1	5
1937	1	1	1	1	1	5
1938	1	1	1	1	1	5
1939	1	1	1	1	1	5
1940	1	1	1	1	1	5
1941	1	1	1	1	1	5
1942	1	1	1	1	1	5
1943	1	1	1	1	1	5
1944	1	1	1	1	1	5
1945	1	1	1	1	1	5
1946	1	1	1	1	1	5
1947	1	1	1	1	1	5
1948	1	1	1	1	1	5
1949	1	1	1	1	1	5
1950	1	1	1	1	1	5
1951	1	1	1	1	1	5
1952	1	1	1	1	1	5
1953	1	1	1	1	1	5
1954	1	1	1	1	1	5
1955	1	1	1	1	1	5
1956	1	1	1	1	1	5
1957	1	1	1	1	1	5
1958	1	1	1	1	1	5
1959	1	1	1	1	1	5
1960	1	1	1	1	1	5
1961	1	1	1	1	1	5
1962	1	1	1	1	1	5
1963	1	1	1	1	1	5
1964	1	1	1	1	1	5
1965	1	1	1	1	1	5
1966	1	1	1	1	1	5
1967	1	1	1	1	1	5
1968	1	1	1	1	1	5
1969	1	1	1	1	1	5
1970	1	1	1	1	1	5
1971	1	1	1	1	1	5
1972	1	1	1	1	1	5
1973	1	1	1	1	1	5
1974	1	1	1	1	1	5
1975	1	1	1	1	1	5
1976	1	1	1	1	1	5
1977	1	1	1	1	1	5
1978	1	1	1	1	1	5
1979	1	1	1	1	1	5
1980	1	1	1	1	1	5
1981	1	1	1	1	1	5
1982	1	1	1	1	1	5
1983	1	1	1	1	1	5
1984	1	1	1	1	1	5
1985	1	1	1	1	1	5
1986	1	1	1	1	1	5
1987	1	1	1	1	1	5
1988	1	1	1	1	1	5
1989	1	1	1	1	1	5
1990	1	1	1	1	1	5
1991	1	1	1	1	1	5
1992	1	1	1	1	1	5
1993	1	1	1	1	1	5
1994	1	1	1	1	1	5
1995	1	1	1	1	1	5
1996	1	1	1	1	1	5
1997	1	1	1	1	1	5
1998	1	1	1	1	1	5
1999	1	1	1	1	1	5
2000	1	1	1	1	1	5

From this Table it will be seen that (excluding the Asylum) forty-two notifications only were received, and that these referred for the most part, to isolated cases. It can therefore be fairly stated that during the past year your District has been free from epidemic disease. An analysis of the seven deaths which occurred from Typhoid disease is given in the appended Table:-

Table showing Total Cases

Scarlet Typhoid Diphtheria Measles Typhus Total

Period	Scarlet	Typhoid	Diphtheria	Measles	Typhus	Total
1910	1	1	1	1	1	5
1911	1	1	1	1	1	5
1912	1	1	1	1	1	5
1913	1	1	1	1	1	5
1914	1	1	1	1	1	5
1915	1	1	1	1	1	5
1916	1	1	1	1	1	5
1917	1	1	1	1	1	5
1918	1	1	1	1	1	5
1919	1	1	1	1	1	5
1920	1	1	1	1	1	5
1921	1	1	1	1	1	5
1922	1	1	1	1	1	5
1923	1	1	1	1	1	5
1924	1	1	1	1	1	5
1925	1	1	1	1	1	5
1926	1	1	1	1	1	5
1927	1	1	1	1	1	5
1928	1	1	1	1	1	5
1929	1	1	1	1	1	5
1930	1	1	1	1	1	5
1931	1	1	1	1	1	5
1932	1	1	1	1	1	5
1933	1	1	1	1	1	5
1934	1	1	1	1	1	5
1935	1	1	1	1	1	5
1936	1	1	1	1	1	5
1937	1	1	1	1	1	5
1938	1	1	1	1	1	5
1939	1	1	1	1	1	5
1940	1	1	1	1	1	5
1941	1	1	1	1	1	5
1942	1	1	1	1	1	5
1943	1	1	1	1	1	5
1944	1	1	1	1	1	5
1945	1	1	1	1	1	5
1946	1	1	1	1	1	5
1947	1	1	1	1	1	5
1948	1	1	1	1	1	5
1949	1	1	1	1	1	5
1950	1	1	1	1	1	5
1951	1	1	1	1	1	5
1952	1	1	1	1	1	5
1953	1	1	1	1	1	5
1954	1	1	1	1	1	5
1955	1	1	1	1	1	5
1956	1	1	1	1	1	5
1957	1	1	1	1	1	5
1958	1	1	1	1	1	5
1959	1	1	1	1	1	5
1960	1	1	1	1	1	5
1961	1	1	1	1	1	5
1962	1	1	1	1	1	5
1963	1	1	1	1	1	5
1964	1	1	1	1	1	5
1965	1	1	1	1	1	5
1966	1	1	1	1	1	5
1967	1	1	1	1	1	5
1968	1	1	1	1	1	5
1969	1	1	1	1	1	5
1970	1	1	1	1	1	5
1971	1	1	1	1	1	5
1972	1	1	1	1	1	5
1973	1	1	1	1	1	5
1974	1	1	1	1	1	5
1975	1	1	1	1	1	5
1976	1	1	1	1	1	5
1977	1	1	1	1	1	5
1978	1	1	1	1	1	5
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1980	1	1	1	1	1	5
1981	1	1	1	1	1	5
1982	1	1	1	1	1	5
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1984	1	1	1	1	1	5
1985	1	1	1	1	1	5
1986	1	1	1	1	1	5
1987	1	1	1	1	1	5
1988	1	1	1	1	1	5
1989	1	1	1	1	1	5
1990	1	1	1	1	1	5
1991	1	1	1	1	1	5
1992	1	1	1	1	1	5
1993	1	1	1	1	1	5
1994	1	1	1	1	1	5
1995	1	1	1	1	1	5
1996	1	1	1	1	1	5
1997	1	1	1	1	1	5
1998	1	1	1	1	1	5
1999	1	1	1	1	1	5
2000	1	1	1	1	1	5

It will be noticed that in the Blofield Sub-District or Western part of the district there have been infectious diseases are represented by a single fatal case of Measles. It will also be noticed that no deaths have been registered as due to Diphtheria, a disease which is very prevalent in the District. The Typhoid death-rate stands at .81 per 1,000 population.

SCARLET FEVER:- Of the sixteen cases of Scarlet Fever, five were notified from Halvergate. This outbreak happily did not extend into the magnitude of an epidemic. It was not found necessary to close the school, care being taken to exclude those children likely to carry infection. The remaining cases were scattered throughout the district and in many instances it was an easy matter to trace the source of infection from without.

DIPHTHERIA:- Only eight cases of diphtheria and one under the somewhat indefinite nomenclature of "Membranous croup" were notified. Three occurred in one house which was found to be in an unsanitary state. Steps were taken to remedy the defects.

TYPHOID FEVER: Fifteen cases were notified and two deaths were registered as due to this disease. With the exception of a group of three cases at Upton, which were introduced from Yarmouth, each case appeared to be quite unconnected with the remainder. No common cause can therefore be assigned for this somewhat unusually large amount of typhoid. Defective sanitary arrangements were discovered in some case and steps taken to remedy the same.

WHOOPING COUGH The District was comparatively free from this disease and it was not found necessary to close any Schools on account of its prevalence. I find, however, that three deaths among children under five years of age were registered as due to this cause.

MEASLES Information was received of outbreaks in St. Plumstead and Lingwood which necessitated the closing of the Schools in these parishes. The death of one infant resulted from the Lingwood outbreak.

MUMPS Cantley School was closed for one week in consequence of the prevalence of this affection.

NEW BYE-LAWS

Urban powers having been acquired by the Authority leave was obtained from the Local Government Board on May 8th 1896 for the adoption of bye-laws with respect to new Streets and buildings. It was thought expedient to confine their operations, for the present, to the parish of Thorpe St. Andrew the most rapidly growing locality in the District. I desire to congratulate the Council on this initial step and feel little doubt that, as evidence accumulates of their usefulness in Thorpe similar bye-laws will be adopted for other localities where building is likely to take place.

The Sections 69 to 88 of these bye-laws which refer to the construction of privies, ash-pits and cesspools are of especial value in your District and it would be an undoubted advantage if these provisions could be extended so as to affect its entire area.

The Inspector of Nuisances reports the following nuisances dealt with during this year

Deficient water supply	13
" privy accommodation	19
Insanitary Butcheries & Milk shops.	3
Foul drains, cesspits etc.	44
Deficient drainage	17
Collections of garbage & foul accumulations.	35
Dilapidated dwellings	6

Total 153.

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MEASLES Information was received of outbreak in St. Andrew's and Linwood which necessitated the closing of the schools in those parishes. The death of one infant resulted from the Linwood outbreak.

MUMPS Gentry School was closed for one week in consequence of the prevalence of this affliction.

NEW BYE-LAWS

Urban powers having been acquired by the Authority leave was obtained from the Local Government Board on May 25th 1895 for the adoption of bye-laws with respect to new streets and buildings. It was thought expedient to confine their operations, for the present, to the parish of Thorpe St. Andrew the most rapidly growing locality in the District. I desire to congratulate the Council on this initial step and feel little doubt that, as evidence accumulates of their usefulness in Thorpe similar bye-laws will be adopted for other localities where building is likely to take place. The Sections 69 to 88 of the bye-laws which refer to the construction of privies, ash-pits and cesspools are of especial value in your District and it would be an undoubted advantage if these provisions could be extended as far as to affect the entire area.

The Inspector of nuisances reports the following nuisances dealt with during this year

Deficient water supply	18
" " privy accommodations	19
Insanitary Butcheries & Milk shops.	3
Poul drains, cesspits etc.	44
Deficient drainage	17
Collections of refuse & foul accumulations.	35
Disinfecting dwellings	6
Total	132

THEORPE VILLAGE

Population, census 1891 - 1317 (without Asylum) fully justify the
 " Annual rate of increase 10.4
 " Estimated for middle of 1896 - 1370
 Births 51 - birth rate 37.2
 Deaths 18 - death-rate 13.1

Summary of deaths -

At ages under one month 5
 At ages over 65 years 8
 From infectious disease 0
 Drowned 1
 At other ages & from other causes, 4
18

Zymotic death-rate - zero.

Table showing the estimated population, the number of deaths, the death-rate and zymotic death-rate for the last five years.

Year	Population	No. of deaths	Death-rate	Zymotic Death-rate
1892	1330	20	15.0	4.5
1893	1340	26	19.1	2.1
1894	1350	18	13.3	0
1895	1360	15	11.0	.07
1896	1370	18	13.1	0

From the above statement of statistical facts it will be evident that the health of this village is maintained in a highly satisfactory state. It is true the death-rate is two points higher than in the previous year but on referring to the table giving the summary of deaths it will be found that the list is swelled by the deaths of five infants at ages under one month. Four of these infants were certified as dying from "premature birth" - a cause of death obviously unconnected with the sanitation of the village. But for this unusual mortality among newly born infants the death-rate would have been lower than has been the case for many years.

It is most satisfactory to record that no deaths from infectious disease were registered during the year in this village. Diphtheria was entirely absent.

Three cases of scarlet fever and two cases of Typhoid were notified. The scarlet fever cases occurred in dwelling houses where proper isolation was practicable and presented no difficulties.

Of the two cases of Typhoid fever the first was notified from a cottage in the Ten Yard. The source of infection was not discovered. This case was the cause of much anxiety and it required the greatest care to prevent it becoming the centre of an outbreak. Fortunately the pail system has superseded the old privy bin in this yard and it is in no small measure owing to this circumstance that an epidemic was averted. In connection with this case I desire to testify to the efficient way in which the public scavenger performed his duties both in removing daily the infected excreta and flushing the drains with

THEORETICAL VILLAGE

Population, census 1891 - 1317 (without Asylum)

Annual rate of increase 10.4

Estimated for middle of 1896 - 1370

Births 51 - birth rate 37.2

Deaths 18 - death-rate 13.1

Summary of deaths -

At ages under one month 5

At ages over 5 years 8

From infectious disease 6

Drowned 1

At other ages & from other causes 4

18

Symptomatic death-rate - 13.1

Table showing the estimated population, the number of deaths, the death-rate and symptomatic death-rate for the last five years.

Year	Population	No. of Deaths	Death-rate	Symptomatic Death-rate
1896	1370	18	13.1	0
1895	1350	15	11.0	0
1894	1330	18	13.5	0
1893	1310	25	19.1	2.1
1892	1290	20	15.5	4.5

From the above statement of statistical facts it will be evident that the health of this village is maintained in a highly satisfactory state. It is true the death-rate is two points higher than in the previous year but on referring to the table giving the summary of deaths it will be found that the list is swelled by the deaths of five infants at ages under one month. Four of these infants were certified as dying from "premature birth" - a cause of death obviously unconnected with the sanitation of the village. But for this unusual mortality among newly born infants the death-rate would have been lower than has been the case for many years.

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Of the two cases of typhoid fever the first was notified from a cottage in the Ten Yard. The source of infection was not discovered. This case was the cause of much anxiety and it required the greatest care to prevent it becoming the centre of an outbreak. Fortunately the pump system has superseded the old cistern in this yard and is in no small measure owing to this circumstance that an epidemic was averted. In connection with this case I desire to testify to the efficient way in which the public scavenger performed his duties both in removing daily the infected excreta and flushing the drains with

corrosive sublimate solution.

The only other case of typhoid occurred in High House and was at once traced to defective drainage.

The active building operations in the village fully justify the adoption by the Council of the Bye-laws regulating the construction of New Streets and Buildings. The working of these Bye-laws since May 8th 1896 has resulted in plans for thirteen new houses being passed one set of plans being rejected and two being referred for alterations.

Thorpe Village has received during the last five years a large share of the attention of the District Council and in addition to the many improvements carried out has had the advantage of an additional sanitary Inspector. The fruit of this extra attention is now being reaped in an immunity of infectious disease and a comparative cessation of complaints of nuisances. Mr. King (the Inspector) reports that he received during the past year only three complaints of nuisances and no complaints whatever in connection with the emptying of pails and bins, a very marked difference from what was the state of the case a few years back. There seems, indeed, at the present time but little necessity for a special Inspector for Thorpe. It must not however be concluded that Thorpe is entirely without reproach. A class of nuisances connected with the disposal of slop-water and the overflow from cesspools has not yet been satisfactorily dealt with. Notable among them is the "Station Ditch nuisance," which has formed the subject of many reports. This is a matter of serious importance and one which must be taken in hand by the Council sooner or later. I have already advised for the abatement of this nuisance a scheme which I believe would be successful and entail only a small expenditure. The main difficulty is to be found in determining on whom the expense should fall - on the rate payer or on private individuals contributing to the nuisance. On this point, I am happy to say, it is not the duty of your Medical Officer to advise.

THE COUNTY ASYLUM An annual report on the health of this institution is furnished by the Resident Medical Superintendent. During the past year I have received notification of one case of Diphtheria and three of Typhoid fever. There were no deaths from infectious disease.

Included in the 79 deaths were 13 certified as due to Phthisis

I have the honour to remain

Your obedient Servant,

HERBERT H. BACK M.B.

Med. Off. of Health.

Reepham

April 1897.

corrosive sublimate solution.

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The active building operations in the village fully justify the objection by the Council of the bye-laws regulating the construction of new streets and buildings. The working of these bye-laws since May 8th 1896 has resulted in plans for thirteen new houses being passed one set of plans being rejected and two being referred for alterations.

Thorp Village has received during the last five years a large share of the attention of the Council and in addition to the many improvements carried out has had the advantage of an additional sanitary inspector. The fruit of this extra attention is now being reaped in an immunity of infectious diseases and a comparative cessation of complaints of nuisances. Mr. King (the Inspector) reports that he received during the past year only three complaints of nuisances and no complaints whatever in connection with the emptying of wells and pits. A very marked difference from what was the state of the case a few years back. There seems, indeed, at the present time but little need easily for a special Inspector for Thorpe. It must not however be concluded that Thorpe is entirely without reproach. A class of nuisances connected with the disposal of slop-water and the overflow from cesspools has not yet been satisfactorily dealt with. Notable among them is the "Station ditch nuisance" which has formed the subject of many reports. This is a matter of serious importance and one which must be taken in hand by the Council sooner or later. I have already advised for the abatement of this nuisance a scheme which I believe would be successful and entail only a small expenditure.

The main difficulty is to be found in determining on whom the expense should fall - on the rate payer or on private individuals contributing to the nuisance. On this point I am happy to say it is not the duty of your Medical Officer to advise.

THE COUNTY ASYLUM - An annual report on the health of this institution is furnished by the Resident Medical Superintendent. During the past year I have received notification of one case of Diphtheria and three of Typhoid fever. There were no deaths from infectious diseases. Included in the 79 deaths were 13 certified as due to Phthisis.

I have the honor to remain,
 Your obedient servant,
 HERBERT H. BACK M.B.
 Med. Off. of Health.

Reepham
 April 1897.